QUARTERLY UPDATE: DECEMBER 2017

FOCUS AREA 1: HEALTHY AIR, WATER, AND LAND

Goals:

- 1. Work with respective authorities to implement rules and programs to protect natural resources and build healthier communities.
- 2. Implement strategies that address geographic priorities by connecting environmental justice needs with existing resources within EPA and beyond.

COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	COMMENTS / STATUS
Policy 1. Work in partnership to ensure implementation and compliance of all EPA laws and regulations. Complete list can be found at: http://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations	EPA and Respective Authorities	No updates at this time.
Communications 2. Create a state-wide Environmental Justice network to categorize challenges, form workgroups and begin strategic work plans.	OEJTIA	In January 2016, EPA began a series on calls and visits to begin to categorize and prioritize challenges, enlist collaborators and champions and form workgroups to develop action plans for challenges identified in this action plan. Quarterly conference calls include updates from community and local, state and federal partners.
3. Host quarterly conference calls with EJ constituents to exchange information, report on progress, and explore strategies to remove barriers.	OEJTIA	The next teleconference with all of the Texas EJ partners will be March 2018.

FOCUS AREA 2: SUPERFUND SITES

	OCOS ARLA 2. SUPERFUND SITES				
Goal: Co	Goal: Continue to clean up hazardous waste sites in Texas - while keeping communities actively engaged and informed.				
	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	COMMENTS / STATUS		
	 Continue to make progress in the designated Superfund sites – while keeping the public informed on progress. Complete list can be found at: http://www.epa.gov/tx/cleanups-texas#sites 	SF	The EPA Superfund Division has been working collaboratively with federal and state partners to assess and address contamination and to eliminate, reduce or manage risks to human health in Texas – and will continue to keep communities actively engaged and informed.		
	2. Implement outreach/education plans to increase awareness of risks, baseline studies, processes, regulatory involvement, public participation and the public's right to know.	SF, OEJTIA	Donna Canal: On September 20, 2016, EPA and ARISE hosted a training session on how to provide effective comments to residents living near the Donna Canal. On October 17, 2016, the Remedial Project Manager (RPM) met with the irrigation district, the owner of the Site, to discuss the status of the Proposed Plan for the Site. On October 18, 2016, the RPM provided presentations, concerning the Donna Site, to the University of Texas (Harlingen, TX) medical students and to the Texas A&M University Health Sciences Center (McAllen, TX) students. On February 13, 2017, the EPA met with the representatives of the Donna Irrigation District. The representatives stated that they were planning to meet with the District on February 21, 2017, and recommend direct sampling of the siphon construction materials. The EPA stated that a sampling plan should be		

developed for the EPA's review, and that the EPA would take split samples. In June 2017, the EPA conducted fish removal actions. The purpose of the fish removal actions was to remove fish, from the reservoir and canal system, possibly contaminated with PCBs and which were available for human consumption. These removal actions also created a public awareness campaign which spread the EPA's following message to the public through newspaper and television media: "Do not eat the fish caught from the Site because they may contain chemicals (i.e., PCBs) that may cause cancer and other health effects." SF **San Jacinto Waste Pits:** More than 300 community members attended the San Jacinto Public Meeting held October 20, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. in Harris County, Texas. The Proposed Plan for the cleanup of the Site (removal with offsite disposal) was well received in the Highlands Community Center and endorsed by many Federal, State, and local officials. A Texas Congressman, Harris County Attorney, and Harris County Commissioner, all supported EPA's Proposed Plan. On October 11, 2017, the cleanup plan to address highly toxic dioxin contamination at the San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund site in Harris County, Texas was approved. The selected remedy will protect human health and the environment by removing highly contaminated material from the site and securing less contaminated areas. On December 4, 2017, EPA, in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Federal, State and Harris County agencies, and local officials held a Community Meeting in Highlands, TX to discuss the cleanup plan. Discussions also included the Record of Decision (ROD) selected remedy, future activities, river channel stabilization work and timetables.

SF	El Dorado Chemical CO., INC.: On April 17 – 18, 2017, the EPA
	met with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Texas
	Department of State Health Services, U.S. Geologic Survey, and
	the Edwards Aquifer Authority to coordinate, plan, and share
	data for upcoming Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study
	(RI/FS) site activities. On May 9, 2017, EPA held a meeting with
	the Bridlewood Park Homeowners Association to discuss the
	upcoming RI/FS.

FOCUS AREA 3: PERMITTING and ENFORCEMENT

Goal: Empower communities to take action before and after permits are issued and work with proper authorities to investigate possible violations.

possible vi	possible violations.				
	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	COMMENTS / STATUS		
	Enhance early public participation.	OEJTIA and Respective	TCEQ plays a key role in the TX EJ Partners teleconferences by answering questions from EJ leaders and by providing		
	Enhance awareness of processes to report possible violations.	Authorities	information related to public participation and efforts that may be benefit communities.		
	3. Work with proper authorities to investigate and address problematic permitted facilities that have been reported by environmental justice communities.		Texas Secretary of State Office – Colonias Program is also part of the agenda during the quarterly calls with EJ partners and has provided guidance on where and how to report concerns in unincorporated areas.		

FOCUS AREA 4: URBAN, RURAL AND UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

Goals:

- 1. Form collaborations to bring infrastructure for drinking water and sanitary sewer services to EJ communities.
- 2. Create healthier communities by restoring urban waters through partnerships.
- 3. Reduce pesticide risks of farmworkers and their families by working collaborative with proper authorities.
- 4. Address air quality challenges through collaborative partnerships.
- 5. Better prepare rural and unincorporated communities for man-made or natural disasters.

COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	COMMENTS / STATUS
1. Coordinate and provide assistance to the City of San Antonio and the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) in support of their Urban Waters Projects. Current projects include; San Pedro Creek Restoration, Olmos Basin Ecosystem Restoration, Eastside Promise Zone and the Promise/Choice Neighborhood. Upcoming projects include; Westside Creeks Restoration, Brackish Desalination and the San Antonio Missions – World Heritage	WQ	Urban Waters San Antonio Partnership continues to support public outreach activities regarding project specific aspects which include citizen advisory committees from each neighborhood specific interests and issues raised in public forums. EPA will support as needed by the project leads on a continuous basis, as they proceed w/planning 2017 activities. https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-02/documents/sa-urban-waters-fact-sheet-011315.pdf
2. Establish a Village Green Station in Houston, TX (epa.gov/villagegreen)	OEJTIA, MM, ORD	The Village Green Houston Station is housed and operated at The Health Museum in Houston, TX. The station currently collects data on a continual basis, with minimal hands-on interaction. The minute-by-minute pollutant readings and meteorology data help local and regional scientists investigate the impact of local sources and gives the public immediate access to the collected air quality data through the AirNow web interface (www.airnow.gov/villagegreen). The Village Green station is available for daily public use.

	Address socione acceptal socione in Divis Dides	1440	R6 UIC reviewed information received from U.S. Senator John
3.	Address environmental concerns in Blue Ridge	WQ	
	Neighborhood, Houston, TX		Cornyn's office, on behalf of a citizen, about environmental
			concerns in the Blue Ridge neighborhood, in southwest Houston,
			TX. On January 3, 2017, UIC met with the R6 Multimedia Radon
			Coordinator, who requested UIC's input, since the concerns focus
			on a former salt dome mining operation. A consulting company
			(Talus Resources, LLC) indicated their belief that cracking of roads
			and home foundations may be indicative of an imminent collapse
			of the former solution mining operation, and could be providing
			conduits for methane and radon to enter homes. Talus also
			referred to elevated levels of radon in groundwater from water
			supply wells in or near the Blue Ridge neighborhood. UIC
			Enforcement is reviewing the information for potential
			enforcement action.
			R6 UIC contacted the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC), which
			has the authority to address releases due to oil and gas
			production activities, and was informed that RRC conducted site
			inspections at the citizen's home between July and October 2016,
			and conducted a recent subsidence survey of the Blue Ridge Salt
			Dome and surrounding residential area. The RRC provided
			inspection and subsidence reports to EPA. RRC's reports showed
			no regional subsidence of the salt dome or nearby residential
			neighborhood. R6 DW contacted TCEQ regarding gross alpha
			MCL violations in a public supply well that prompted a referral to
			TCEQ's Office of Compliance and Enforcement. R6 MM provided
			a home radon test kit to the citizen in January 2017. The result
			was 0.7 pCi/L, which is below EPA's guidance of 4 pCi/L.
			On March 29, 2017, R6 XA sent a response letter to Senator
			Cornyn, cc the citizen, with copies of RRC and TCEQ responses
			and reports, and an EPA fact sheet, "Radon in Drinking Water."
			No additional inquiry was received after EPA's response.
<u>Rural</u>			
4.	Work collaborative with proper authorities to expand	MM	The revised final rule was effective January 1, 2016. EPA in
	awareness of the Worker Protection Standards (WPS)		conjunction with the Pesticide Educational Resources
	program and create bridges where gaps may exist.		Collaborative (PERC) is making available a guide to help users of
			agricultural pesticides comply with the requirements of the 2015
			revised federal Worker Protection Standard.

		https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/pesticide-worker-
		protection-standard-how-comply-manual
5. Coordinate HAZMAT and emergency response training targeting rural and unincorporated communities.	SF	In order to strengthen Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), Region 6 issues a quarterly LEPC newsletter, supports the national HOTZONE conference for local responders and conducts LEPC workshops. LEPCs are voluntary organizations made up of local industry, government, first responders, elected officials and citizens. These LEPCs are important organizations in responding quickly and effectively to emergencies These workshops focused on requirements of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act for industry and communities, emergency preparedness oil spills, and the Chemical Safety Executive Order. In 2016, EPA Region 6 hosted 32 LEPC workshops throughout TX, NM, OK, AK, and LA in 2016. Sixteen of these workshops were held throughout Texas.
Rural & Urban		Tield till oughout results
6. Encourage and train schools with aging facilities to implement the <u>3T's for Reducing Lead in Drinking</u> Water and Child Care Facilities	WQ, OEJTIA	R6 Assistance Team is working with the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) in planning an information and resource workshop on the 3T's for Reducing Lead in School in Drinking Water for the El Paso Independent School District (EPISD). The Team is currently collaborating with EPISD, as well as TCEQ and Texas Department of State Health Services in shaping the agenda for the 1-day workshop, which will take place in late April/Early May 2018.
Unincorporated Areas 7. Facilitate collaboration for priorities identified by 14 colonias in the Texas Lower Rio Grande Valley- and replicate successful strategies in other areas.	OEJTIA, SF	Priorities bring address include wastewater plant concerns, emergency preparedness, and public awareness of risks associated with contaminated fish from Donna Canal. In 2017, The community and partners hosted a one-day emergency preparedness workshop for over 200 residents. The City of Alamo has secured a 30K to conduct the preliminary engineering assessment to address the malfunctioning open wastewater lagoon. Plans for an outreach strategy to reach out to schools and clinics about the risks of eating contaminated fish from the Donna Canal is being developed.

8.	Facilitate discussions between partners to explore options for bringing drinking water and sanitary sewer services to the Sandbranch community in Dallas County.	OEJTIA, OEJ	On March 22, 2016, EPA convened a governmental partners meeting with 11 organizations to address the barriers that had prevented water and wastewater services in the past. To date the community has obtained authority to run their own water supply corporation. The Preliminary Engineering Assessment has been completed through a grant from USDA-RD and the community will be applying for additional funds for the infrastructure needed. Conversation with potential planning and affordable housing organization have also begun. In November 2017, EPA issued a Technical Assistances Services for Communities (TASC) contract to EPA contractor Skeo. Under the TASC agreement, Skeo, in partnership with EPA, will assist the community in drafting an infrastructure roadmap to secure water, wastewater and solid waste services, along with necessary housing modifications. Planning activities will begin January 2018.
9.	Coordinate with TWDB, TDA & other State and federal partners to provide water and waste water infrastructure to Cindi Park Colonia and surrounding Colonias	wq	Nueces County on behalf of Cindy Park 2 Water Supply Corp. is getting \$900,000 in financial assistance. The Nueces County Commissioners Court is contributing \$70,000. TWDB is contributing \$830,000 in DWSRF principal forgiveness. It is made up of \$200,000 from the DWSRF Very Small Systems Program and \$630,000 from the DWSRF Disadvantaged Community Program. The \$900,000 is to finance the planning, design and construction of water distribution improvements. A 4.5 mile water transmission line will connect Cindy Park 1 and 2 and two other neighborhoods to the Nueces Water Supply Corp (NWSC). Upon project completion, the neighborhoods will be NWSC customers. Project Schedule: Planning Phase 03/22/2017. Design Phase 06/30/2017. Closing 07/28/2017. Construction Start 08/30/2017. Construction Completion 03/28/2018.
10	Collaborate with USDA to help provide approximately \$2 million in funding for the construction of the Cuadrilla (El Paso County, TX) project to supplement \$3.5 million in EPA's BEIF funding for the construction	WQ	The Cuadrilla colonia received wastewater service through a package plant that service the area. Over the last 5 years the treatment plant stopped treating its incoming raw wastewater to an irrigation canal. The Cuadrilla area was transferred to the

of a wastewater collection system to provide service to 25 homes.		Lower Valley Water District which is the project sponsor. Because of the high groundwater table in the area, the project increased to approximately \$5.5 million therefore requiring the sponsor to work closely with EPA, the BECC and the Texas Secretary of State's Ombudsperson to secure USDA funding. The planning and design is complete. Project sponsor is in the process of procuring and awarding the construction contract. EPA BEIF is providing 100% funding for this project. Collaboration with USDA is not necessary.
<u>Border Water Infrastructure</u>		
11. Provide \$1.8 million dollars to North Alamo to provide access to wastewater collection and treatment services for 471 (approximately 1,680 residents) homes with funding assistance from NADB's administered BEIF funding.	WQ	These investments will eliminate untreated or inadequately treated wastewater discharges. The project is projected to receive TWDB funding for the collection and wastewater treatment system in the amount of \$9 million. The estimated total construction cost of the project is approximately \$11 million. The project is expected to initiate construction in 3 rd quarter FY16. Project sponsor is in the process of awarding the construction contract.
12. Provide \$3.7 million dollars to Brownsville Public Utilities Board provide access to wastewater collection and treatment services for 685 (approximately 2,630 residents) homes, of which up to 465 new residential connections will be installed through NADB-BEIF funding.	WQ	Technical assistance for the hookup portion of the project was also provided by USEPA through the Project Development Assistance Program administered by the BECC in the amount of \$85,000. These investments will eliminate untreated or inadequately treated wastewater discharges of approximately 0.21 million gallons per day and therefore reduce the likelihood of groundwater and surface water contamination in the Brownsville area. The BEIF funding will supplement \$24.5 million in EDAP grant and \$840,000 loan from TWDB. The hook up portion of the project is expected to initiate construction in 3 rd quarter FY17. Project sponsor is in the process of awarding the construction supervision and construction contracts.
13. Address malfunctioning septic tanks and cesspools in Cotton Valley	WQ	The Lower Valley Water District located in Clint, TX, sponsored a groundbreaking ceremony initiating the start of construction for a new wastewater collection system for the Colonia of Cotton Valley, Texas. The collected wastewater from the colonia will be treated by the City of El Paso, Texas. Funding for this \$1.2 million project is through EPA's Border Environment Infrastructure Fund (BEIF) Program. Currently, homes within the Cotton Valley Colonia use malfunctioning septic tank systems and cesspools to

	manage their wastewater. Components of the project include;
	5,600 LF of 18, 12 and 8-inch sewer lines, 22 concrete manholes, service laterals/connections and the decommissioning of septic
	tanks and cesspools. This project will provide first time
	wastewater collection service to 80 homes and approximately
	300 people.

FOCUS AREA 5: IMPACTS FROM PORTS AND PORT EXPANSION

Goal: Reduce environmental impacts on communities near ports through federal cooperation and public awareness.			
COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	COMMENTS / STATUS	
Enhance outreach efforts and information sharing activities that impact the environment of nearby communities	for MM	EPA has collaboratively developed three draft tools to support effective stakeholder engagement between near-port communities and port facilities; 1. Ports Primer 2. Community Action Plan 3. Environmental Justice Primer Public comment period closed on August 31, 2016. Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (LA) and the Lower 9 th Ward Center for Sustainable Infrastructure (LA) were selected.	

FOCUS AREA 6: LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS

Goal: Prevent or minimize chemical accidents or exposure risks through partner collaboration, strong enforcement, community awareness and public involvement.

awareness a	ness and public involvement.		
	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	COMMENTS / STATUS
	Prevent, prepare for and respond to oil spills that occur in and around inland waters of the Unites States.	SF	EPA Region 6 conducts over 200 inspections annually to ensure that necessary precautions are taken to prevent spills. When spills do happen EPA is ready to respond to them. When an oil spill occurs that threatens waters of the U.S. and exceeds 1000 gallons, EPA Region 6 will dispatch a response team to investigate and address the spill, if necessary. These response actions include plugging abandoned oil wells, removing oil from abandoned containers, pipes and barges and overseeing companies as they clean up oil that has spilled. All of these activities support citizens living in the shadow of the oil industry.
	2. Build capacity with the local emergency planning committees (LEPCs) which include local officials, first responders, citizens, on roles responsibilities and best practices – as well as increase awareness of the chemicals in their communities.	SF	In order to strengthen Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), EPA Region 6 issues a quarterly LEPC newsletter, supports the national HOTZONE conference for local responders and conducts LEPC workshops. LEPCs are voluntary organizations made up of local industry, government, first responders, elected officials and citizens. These LEPCs are important organizations in responding quickly and effectively to emergencies. In 2016, EPA Region 6 hosted 32 LEPC workshops throughout TX, NM, OK, AK, and LA in 2016. Sixteen of these workshops were held throughout Texas.
			These workshops focused on requirements of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act for industry and communities, emergency preparedness oil spills, and the Chemical Safety Executive Order. The Region is evaluating alternative approaches such as a series of conference calls and webinars to support LEPCs in 2017.

ABBREVIATIONS AND NAMES:

MM = Multimedia Division (Formerly 6PD - Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division)

OEJ = Office of Environmental Justice

OEJTIA = Office of Environmental Justice, Tribal, and International Affairs (Formerly - OEJTA)

ORD = Office of Research and Development

SF = Superfund Division

WQ = Water Division (Formerly - Water Quality Protection Division)